

## THE TARIFF AND PETROLEUM

### OIL PEOPLE WANT THEIR PRODUCTION PROTECTED.

If Countervailing Duty is Abolished Russian and Mexican Competitors Will Flood the American Market, While Our Oil Is Barred From Russia and Mexico.

Under the present or Dingley tariff, as well as under the previous one, petroleum and its products enjoy no specific protection. In other words, it is on the free list. In pursuance, however, of the reciprocity idea the Congress which passed the present and preceding tariffs enacted that a countervailing duty should be put on petroleum or its products coming to this country from countries where an import duty was demanded on American

petroleum, crude or refined. Wherever, in fact, American petroleum is admitted free the products of that country are admitted free to the United States.

It is therefore a matter over which the potentially exporting countries alone have control. It is for them to say whether their oil comes in here free or not. Russia, for instance, exacts an import duty of about 15 cents a gallon on American oil, or nearly twice the actual value of the oil itself—a duty which will be seen at once to be prohibitive. Under that duty American oil is entirely excluded from Russian territory.

Now, Russia is a very large producer of oil, and if it has a surplus which it might with advantage send here it can do so by removing the prohibitive duty from American oil. If it refuses to remove that duty, as it has refused, the question arises, Should the American oil producers and refiners of America's asked to compete flatly in their own markets with Rus-

sian oil with which all competition is cut off in the Russian market?

But a competitor nearer home has arisen, namely, in Mexico, where the oil fields are showing great development. This impending flood of Mexican oil has aroused the oil producers of the United States and they are organizing against any alteration of the tariff, for Mexico has a tariff of 15 cents a gallon on refined American oil. Like the Russian duty, it is prohibitive. Canada too is showing signs of large production in the near

future. The Dominion pays a bounty of 50 cents a barrel on all Canadian oil.

Popular Move Against Oil.

Certain Congressmen, apparently believing that it would win popular applause to originate a law repealing the countervailing clause introduced into the late Congress with that end in view. Their aim was to strike a blow at the biggest oil company, whereas such a repeal would benefit only the Russians and Mexicans, who might find entry for their oil, and would be an injury to every oil producer and oil manufacturer in the United States.

The biggest company, it is true, refines eight-tenths of the crude oil of the country, but five-sixths of the oil producing wells are owned by persons and corporations outside the company. It is on these oil well men and companies that the main loss would fall in the face of a flood of Russian oil being dumped on our market.

The independent refiners—and there are 123 of them with a combined capital of \$100,000,000—would suffer equally with the big company. But the greatest injury would come from the discouragement of drilling for oil and consequently oil production, by a legion of men with modest capital who now break earth wherever there is a chance of finding the precious fluid beneath the surface. The curtailment of the margin of profit would put the enterprise of the oil seeker out of business.

The Real Effect.

The point is that the blow aimed by the Congressmen in question at a single large corporation would be felt almost entirely by the producers and refiners outside the big corporation. As the matter will doubtless come up before the present Congress in the general scheme of tariff revision it is probable that it will be treated according to the principles of fair play and that the reasonable course which commended itself to two previous tariff raising Congresses will remain on the statute books.

In this connection it will be recalled that it was due to the reciprocal or countervailing clause in the sugar tariff that the countries of Europe abolished the export bounty on beet sugar. To protect American sugar growers—cane and beet—the tariff provided that all sugars on which foreign Governments paid an export bounty should pay an equivalent of the bounty on entering here as well as the regular tariff made and provided.

Result, a conference of the beet sugar men of Europe bringing about an abrogation of the sugar bounties. Here, then, is a case in which the foreigners who desired an American market themselves renounced the bounties which prevented their merchandise from entering here without any differential. In the same way if the Russians desire a market here they have only to take down

the bars now up against our oil in Russian territory.

The Varied Users.

From the lightest ethers used in the arts to the coke that cakes on the bottom of the stills every ingredient of the wonderful subterranean mixture is put to man's service.

Asphaltum, which is the base of the California and Texas oils, as paraffine is the base of the Eastern, is entering into wider fields of activity year by year. Many of the California crudes were at one time weighed with asphaltum that for a long time they were used as fuel only. The chemists, however, overcame the difficulties of the extraction of the naphthas and kerosenes, leaving the asphaltum pure for extended use.

As the foundation of the best road oil it is unrivaled. In fact it may be said that in proportion as the road oil carries asphaltum so it is effective. The oiling of roads is a corollary of the use of the automobile, which, has been shown, uses a petroleum naphtha at the other end of the transit problem, namely, the generation of power. The automobile, which not only raises the dust but by a tearing process disintegrates the road surface as the flattened part of the tire becomes once more rounded on leaving the ground.

There are three general methods of employing the oil. In the most complete process the road surface is broken by the plough. It is then sprinkled with the heaviest oil—half a gallon to a gallon of oil per square yard—and then harrowed and rolled. A lasting roadbed results. This, with various modifications, has been used in California over many roads.

Sprinkling the Roads.

Another method coming into very general use in the East is to prepare the roadbed by looking after the crown of the road and brushing off the dust. Over this the road oil is sprinkled from a cart, about half a gallon to the square yard. This should be kept from traffic for a couple of days, hence it is usual to oil only half of the road at a time. This preparation will last a whole season, but if it is done oftener it will result in an enduring asphalted surface.

The third, less permanently effective, is sprinkling the road with an emulsified oil, a mixture of oil, water and saponifying chemicals—which lays the dust and binds the road surface, but calls for reapplication every few weeks. If the emulsified oil has a true asphaltum basis this method will ultimately result in a durable asphalt roadbed.

The question in fact is, as has been said, how much asphaltum has been placed upon the surface. A great activity in the use of the two last methods is reported. Vast quantities of road oil are being made for the purpose named.

Asphaltum also is used largely for roofing paper and roofing. The subway tunnel, for instance, was roofed with this material.

PATENTS ARE INTRICATE.

Wherefore the Great Need of Patent Lawyers in This Country.

From a legal standpoint a patent was a simple instrument until 1838. After that year, however, the Government began to make examinations to see whether the invention was novel or not. This made the patent more difficult to draw and gave rise to a new department of the legal profession, the patent lawyer.

All inventions are evolutions of some previously existing idea, no machine being wholly novel. The law now requires that each inventor point out in his patent what are novel parts or ideas, so that the public on reading it could tell what it could or could not use on account of the monopoly granted by the patent. Thus it is necessary to exercise considerable skill in stating features monopolized by the patent, and attorneys who have become skilled in this work are employed to prepare a descriptive part of the patent. It has also become necessary to have

professional assistants in procuring the grant of a patent. A patent suit may turn wholly on a question of general law or practice or on the question of whether the patented machine is so much like a machine previously known that it would not require an inventor's genius to devise the new machine. In the latter case it would be held invalid.

In fact the clauses of a patent are of such a peculiar nature that the Supreme Court has said they are among the most intricate of all pieces of English composition. Hence the importance of the skilled patent lawyers in drawing them up.

MAKING GOOD ADHESIVES.

How This Industry Has Been Developed From Handworking Days.

About twenty years ago it was that flour paste, glue and gum arabic, beyond which there was then little known, were first replaced by higher priced adhesives which were more fit for certain purposes and which more than made up for their extra cost by saving in time and labor and by better work. At that time the use of pasting and gumming machinery was in its infancy in this country and hardly even known abroad. With the growth of American inventive genius the change was made from handwork to mechanical appliances.

Those outside of the trade have hardly any idea to what extent handwork has been displaced by machinery and of the wonderful appliances which had to be invented to do it in the gum making line.

Every one knows, for instance, that envelopes or paper boxes now are made by machines which do a hundred times more work than could be done by hand and do it better; but it may be news to many that a one pound bag of sugar or coffee or soap powder is formed, pasted, filled, weighed and closed automatically, all in one continuous operation. In these days, all by machinery, till it arrives at the ground floor and is hustled into cases at the rate of several hundred packages a minute.

Such delicate machinery needed corresponding adhesive, and these had to be created. Flour paste and glue were out of the question. Work in such lines naturally led to many new ideas which proved of value in any number of other industries, and especially so in the sizing and finishing of paper, silk, cotton, wool, mohair and leather; also in all industries which combine or paste such and kindred materials.

In the many varieties of goods made about every material that has any colloidal qualities, from sea tang to starch and all its derivatives, all natural gums, fats and waxes and all products made from hides, bones and milk were tested. In the course of the studies was discovered a process to make a neutral starch which swells in cold water to the same extent as ordinary starch does through boiling.

Neutral glue, caseine, starch, agaragar, in fact almost any colloid material either directly in liquid form or so prepared as to stay liquid in the cold state after being boiled up, all are recent inventions. These it is expected will in time get some export business for this country when worked out in every particular.

It has been gradually growing in favor, due in great measure to the fact that a few of the larger binders in this country have made a special study of this particular branch of the trade, employing skilled labor and special machinery in its manufacture.

## WOOL OUTLOOK GOOD.

Stocks Are Low and New Clip Consistently Can Be Well Handled.

Boston, March 20.—Jacob F. Brown of Brown & Adams, in the wool line, says the outlook is splendid. "Stocks are very low and we are in splendid condition to handle the new clip," he said. "This time last year our warehouses were filled with unsold stock, but as far as I can see the textile world is recovering magnificently from the financial depression. Boston is the greatest wool market in the world. Over in London, which has that rank, they think it a big day if they sell 15,000 bales, which may be, roughly speaking, 4,000,000 pounds of wool. Here it is possible for a man to buy or sell 40,000,000 pounds in a day. He can buy one pound or a million without ever causing a ripple."

"Right here in a few blocks in Summer street there is more available wool ready for the mill than any place else in the world. The reason? Well, we have the men, the money, the organization. This house has buyers numbering more than four hundred if we count the men we send out from Boston into the producing centers and the local men."

"Then Boston is the natural centre of the woolen trade. There are no woolen or worsted mills worth mentioning west of a line drawn north and south through the middle of Pennsylvania. Jamestown, New York, and Cleveland have done very well, and there are mills in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. But the great majority are right around Boston, in the New England States."

"Another great factor is the unlimited supply of clear water. The western streams, as a rule, are muddy. Our streams run through rocky soil and are as clear as crystal, a very necessary thing in scouring and preparing the wool."

ADDRESSING SYSTEMS.

New and Efficient Methods of Directing Envelopes and Circulars.

Older and less effective systems of addressing envelopes and circulars once were in vogue. Handwriting was a slow process and not always a ready one. Besides which, once a series of addresses were put down by hand the only method of duplication was by copying one after the other.

The club member or subscriber to a magazine notices the clearly printed address on the envelope or circular or wrapper he gets. These things are done by the new addressing processes, which have so far outstripped the old style.

Flexible Bookbinding.

Among the distinctive branches recognized in the bookbinding industry should be mentioned that of flexible work, being the class of books bound in what is known as limp or soft covers. Years ago this style of binding was seldom used except on Bible and hymnal work and was principally done abroad, but it is now employed very generally on all classes of books, both for library and commercial purposes, as it makes a decidedly neat, attractive and strong binding.

It has been gradually growing in favor, due in great measure to the fact that a few of the larger binders in this country have made a special study of this particular branch of the trade, employing skilled labor and special machinery in its manufacture.

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